GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5825
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2001
IRRI
MAHBOOB ZAHEDI

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Manila International Rice Research Institute and some other Universities have reported to have devised a type of rice with 21 mg iron and 34 mg zinc contents, called IR 68144;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this rice requires no help of biotechnology;

(c) whether iron content in rice rectifies blood and zinc content protects suffering from diarrhoea and safeguards growing from excess collostal in blood;

(d) whether the iron and zinc contents available in the newly devised rice are almost double the contents of Indian rice;

(e) if so, whether the Government propose to go in for cultivation of such specific rice; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Los Banos, Philippines has developed rice variety i.e. IR 68144 having 21 mg Iron and 34 mg Zinc content.

(b) This rice variety has been developed through conventional methods of breeding without the help of biotechnology.

(c) Increased iron content in blood through consumption of this rice has been found to improve haemoglobin level in blood and is likely to help in alleviating iron deficiency anemia (IDA) problem. As regards the role of higher iron and zinc content in rice safe-guarding from increasing cholesterol in blood, experimental evidences are lacking.

(d) The iron and zinc content available in the newly devised rice are almost double the content of normal Indian rice.

(e) & (f): The lines developed at IRRI are generally tested for their responseto different biotic and abiotic stresses and their suitability is thoroughly assessed in the agroclimatic conditions of India. Only after their superiority is established in the Indian conditions, such lines may be recommended for cultivation.